1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

In such cases the doctor's friends, recognizing his guilt, made no attempt to avenge his death. Sometimes when a shaman had poisoned several persons, four or five Washo would get together and say, "We have got to kill him, or you and I'll be poisoned." Dave dictated the following relevant sentences in Washo:

[539] **The doctor is mad. He tries to poison us all, it seems to us. That's the way he used to do in the old days. A Washo doctor always tried to injure his own people in the old days.**

Sometimes another shaman finds out about the poisoning, and then the victim's father may get one of his other sons to kill the sorcerer. "This is the old Washo way," said Dave.

Notwithstanding the benevolence Dave ascribed to a doctor (p. 318), he made it clear that the same man who cured by suction might at another time poison a man he hated. This was not like white people's poisoning. The sorcerer merely took a bath in the cool of the early morning on four successive days and talked to himself. When ready, he would get within possibly five hundred yards of his victim. Then he would rub some stuff into the palm of his hand till it became invisible. He also took some fine sand and stepped on it with his left foot. His victim would fall sick, and within two days the heart would be knocked out of him without any one's suspecting the cause, so that he would die. This happened about seventy years ago (Dave *loq.* 1926) to two white men who had refused to give a doctor bread. Some doctors used a different procedure, picking up dust and scattering it toward their enemy with their hands.

Shamanistic power was not confined to causing and curing disease, but also involved various forms of wonderworking. The method of luring antelope into a pound (p. 325) was conveyed in a dream, and so was ability to withstand bullets. About the latter Dave had heard his brother tell the following story:

[224] **One Washo Indian dreamt about bullets and guns. He called together some of his relatives. "I want to show you my dreams. I've been dreaming four years now. I thought it left me, but still I am dreaming. I'll see whether I dream right or not." To the boys he said, "Sit down." He took five round bullets, dug a little hole in the ground, and made fine dust. He put the bullets into the hole. "Watch." The biggest boy was about thirteen or fourteen. "See if the bullets melt down." The dreamer took four smokes—of cigarettes of Indian tobacco. When he lit the last one, he said, "Look at the bullet, see what is going to happen." The bullets had all melted; they cooled down flat. He picked them up. "That's the way I dreamt. I dreamt right. I dreamt about bullets and powder."**

He did the same way with powder. He got half a teaspoonful of powder and put it into the hole. He rolled tobacco in four pieces and smoked. After the last one, he told the others present to watch. "See what the powder will turn into; I dreamt it would be water." It melted down to water. "I dreamt right, I'll do something else after a while."

He loaded a gun and told an old man to shoot him. "I dare not; perhaps I'll kill you." "Try it; I dreamt I'd never get shot, the gun would never go off." He cocked the hammer and got it ready. "See if you can shoot me with the gun. I put my mind on it." The old man asked the dreamer's son, "Shall we kill your father?" "Well, try; maybe the bullets don't go to him. Maybe his dream is right; we'll find out." The man pointed the gun at the dreamer's heart. He tried to pull the trigger. "Pull as hard as you can." It stuck. "I can't make it go off." The dreamer said, "Let me try the gun." "The trigger does not work." He pointed it at a stick and discharged it. "That's the way I dreamt about this gun."

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

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Soon he did something else. He took a long, strong line and made one man hold either end and tighten it. He put a bullet on the string. "See if the bullet doesn't work the way I dreamt. If it doesn't go across the string, don't believe in my dreams. Now watch; it'll go quickly." He put it on the string; it went across as if on a level table, and came back again.

All his friends said, "It works as he dreamt; he dreamt right." He dreamt about three things—bullets, powder, and the gun. No one could make the gun go off except himself. He wanted to try another way. He put down a piece of iron. All looked at it. "Watch it; see if it moves by itself, without anyone's handling it." The iron was the length of a pencil and about two inches thick. "I am ready now." The iron stood up on one end by itself. They said, "You dreamt right."

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This happened about 45 years ago (Dave *loq.* 1926). The old man put everything he dreamt into his house. It burned up. Thereafter he had no more power and could not dream of anything any more. This dreamer was not a doctor. He was a homely old man.

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Strangely enough, neither Dave nor Bill had heard of any *arrow*-proof Washo, but Bill told such a tale about a "Paiute" from Schurz, Nevada, which happened before any whites were there. This Paiute said, "Nobody can kill me by shooting, I am tough." He had something hard and circular all about his body, but no one knew what it was. People would shoot at him, but their arrows merely glanced off. The shaman would sit down and sing, "Some of you think I am not tough, but I am pretty tough." Among the spectators were some Washo, who also tried to shoot the man, but failed. One of them said, "Don't talk so loud; he has something hidden there; I have seen it." He told his brother, "If you want to shoot him, aim straight in the middle." Then the speaker's brother did so, and his arrow entered the body of the shaman, who vainly tried to pull it out, shook and sang, but died on the spot. All the Paiute were angry, and a brother of the slain shaman killed one Washo; the rest ran away.

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Dave mentioned a wonderworker whose power explicitly did not come from dreams but was evidently reckoned equivalent. During a fight with the poorly clad Digger Indians, the Washo asked, "Have any of you a dream of a cold north wind?" One of them answered, "I have no dream, but I'll try to make one. I'll shout and smoke tobacco to make it come." He got on a big rock, and shouted three times, "Come, wind, we want the coldest night, we are fighting the Digger Indians and want to destroy them." Soon the wind came with dust. "Look at the wind coming," said the Indians. There was a big fire under the rock. Soon the Digger Indians followed a track, and two or three went into a badger hole to get warm. They died there. The water froze into ice an inch thick. All the enemy froze to death.

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Rupert, the sophisticated young Washo referred to on page 304, was a mystic credited with shamanistic ambitions (in 1926). He spoke of one Monkey Peter, whom I was unable to meet, as a "philosopher." Rupert said he had seen a man with "mental power" step on fire without being hurt; and he had heard of a woman who had walked up the perpendicular side of a cliff.

756 778 his wife to accompany him and when she saw him begin to sink into the water she screamed with fear. The rock stopped sinking with Mike only knee deep in the water. Since that time no one has attempted to enter the room. This promontory is the center of Water Baby habitation and is reported to be the upper end of a tunnel which extends under the mountains to Genoa so that Water Babies can move freely from the lake to the valley. The rock also marks the eastern end of a road of white sand reported to cross the lake bottom. On the northwest end of the road was located a bed of plants, probably wild parsnips, which [278] doctors gathered for medicine. The wild parsnip was poisonous but doctors ate it to demonstrate their power. [752] They also chewed it into a paste and spread it on rattlesnake bites.

Another spot familiar to doctors was a mysterious hole in the mountains near Blue Lake. The hole could be located by following a spiraling path of white quartz toward the center. According to the Washo tale, if a man dropped even as much as a hair into this hole it made a great roaring sound. Suzie Dick, a Washo woman, whose claim of being one hundred years' old is borne out by white residents, insists that as a fifteen-year-old girl she went to see this hole and was terrorized by a huge hand which reached up out of the darkness and tried to seize her.

[412] Vaguely known to most Washo but familiar to doctors was a cave situated south and west of Gardnerville where ready-made grinding stones were to be found. These, depending on the informant, were made by old Indians or were put there by "nature" for the use of the Washo.

NONCURATIVE USE OF POWER
(2567-2593)

756 789 Indian doctors often used their power in spectacular displays, apparently to impress patients. Often these displays were competitive.

In the words of one informant: "Them old doctors used to see who had the most power. They'd stick four or five sticks in the ground, each one farther away than the last one, and see how many they could knock down." Then, disconcertingly, he added: "You can read about that in Kroeber. He tells about some other Indians who did that but I guess he didn't know the [114] Washo did it too." This informant considered Professor Kroeber as an authority second only to himself in matters pertaining to Indians.

DIVINING AND RAINMAKING
(2553-2556, 2566)

821 791 789 There were no doctors with rainmaking power among the Washo. However, anyone, particularly a man deemed to be a leader, might encourage rain during the summer. The rite, which is still observed occasionally by individuals, consists of soaking a pine-nut cone in water [756] and placing it on the ground in the pine-nut hills. Modern Washo look upon this more as a prayer, but in the past it may have been considered as a spell.

The ancient matriarch Suzie Dick steadfastly insists that less rain falls in the Carson Valley than in neighboring valleys because "nobody is talking to God anymore around here." While she talked she pointed to the clouds hanging over Washo and Antelope valleys and to

791 the cloudless sky overhead.

789 Older white residents speak of Indian rainmakers,
821 which is a source of much amusement among the Washo.
[648] Until a few years ago an Indian, who still lives in Dresslerville, used to take advantage of the gullibility or generosity of white ranchers by performing "rain dances" on their property in return for handouts of food. The Washo generally frowned on this, but because white men were the victims of the fraud it was considered harmless.

The father of the false rainmaker was a diviner of stolen articles. His method was to sit and smoke until the location of the desired article was revealed to him.

OBJECTS OF POWER

237 Eagle and magpie feathers were considered to be
778 the most powerful items of a shaman's paraphernalia.
[231] Doctors are reported to have captured eagles and even
[437] to have tried to raise them to obtain feathers (223-231)
1 The tail feathers were the most prized. Eagle feathers were extremely valuable and could be traded for anything including "a woman or a sack of pine-nut flour or anything worth a lot." Ideally the eagle was tied up until the shaman removed three tail feathers. The doctor then tied a string of beads to the bird's leg and released it as a messenger to the spirits. Description of eagle-down costumes suggest that birds were stripped
[231] of many more feathers than the ideal three. In historic times individuals have attempted to contain eagles. One old man in Woodfords is well known for having kept them on cradle-boards for easy transport, but such experiments usually ended in failure. Magpie feathers were considered less powerful than eagle feathers but still were highly prized. Today they are gathered by chance—taken from dead birds on the highway or picked up where they were shed.

237 In the past, eagle and magpie feathers were impor-
291 tant parts of the dress of warriors. Magpie feathers
778 were used to make a feather cap with a single feather suspended from the top. Informants recall their elders' describing eagle feathers' being suspended individually from the upper arms and thighs of particularly powerful warriors.

795 Modern peyotists have lost none of the traditional
237 Washo feeling about these feathers. The ceremonial
778 fans of road chiefs, believed the only persons capable of handling the immense power, are made of eagle feathers. Other peyotists favor the less powerful but nonetheless potent magpie feather (d'Azevedo and Merriam 1957).

778 Tobacco, as the foregoing accounts illustrate, played
276 an important part in Washo shamanism. It appears to have been used as an offering to the spirits. In addi-
[756] tion it is clear that it was felt to have special power
[782] of its own. Today older men smoke sparingly and are often somewhat embarrassed to be offered a cigarette casually during conversation. In prewhite times the tobacco was a native variety gathered and dried by the shaman. Today Bull Durham appears to have replaced the wild variety as "Indian" tobacco. The Indians seemed delighted to see me rolling a cigarette; they acted as
[795] if I were mastering what they felt was a particularly Indian art. Bull Durham is also important in peyote ceremonialism because it is "real Indian tobacco."

824 Incense cedar plays an important role in modern
795 peyote meetings. It is dried and thrown into the fire
778 to create a fragment smoke which is considered bene-

[P. 374, A]

DREAMS AND DREAMERS

(2566)

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[756] Mentioned almost as frequently as doctors are dreamers, whom the Washo view as distinct from shamans. The so-called antelope shaman and rabbit
[624] boss fall into this category rather than that of doctor.

Dreamers were gifted with a power to foretell special classes of events in dreams. All Washo believe
[828] dreams are likely to foretell the future, and they are alert to find meanings in any dreams they have. Certain persons, those thought of as "dreamers," are reported to have special gifts of this nature.

There are apparently no dreamers among the Washo today, in the sense that the term was used in times past. That is, no one is especially singled out as having infallible dreams foretelling certain classes of
[178] events. It may be that the breakdown of the band structure, which was related to economic exploitative activity, in effect, forced everyone to dream for himself. In
787 the past, dreamers were particularly important in set-
[756] ting the time and place for activities which were carried out by large groups, such as hunting, fishing,
[621] pine-nut gathering, and war. With the disappearance of the last seminomadic bands in the middle 1920's,
[178] as well as with the reduced importance of hunting and fishing as group activities, persons having dreams which directed group actions were no longer useful. Today, dreams appear to occur to a number of individuals, and those felt to be of social significance usually deal with catastrophe or other foreboding subjects. The following stories were told to me by the widow under the shadow of witchcraft. When I asked her if she thought any of her friends would tell me their dreams, she replied: "No I don't think no Washo would tell you their dreams. But I'm not superstitious about them things and I'll tell you these two dreams I had."

"One summer I was up at the Lake [Tahoe] with my husband and I had a dream that the gambling house at
[539] Dresslerville [a structure known officially as the community center] was on fire. There was kids inside and they was screaming but there wasn't no water. I saw the men all around with buckets but they couldn't do nothing because there wasn't no water. I told my hus-
[828] band about the dream the next morning and he said I should take a bath and pray. That's what we do to keep a bad dream from happening."

The following winter the community center did in fact burn down. A young Indian in a rage after having an argument with his father hurled a bottle of kerosene against a wood stove. The resulting fire could not be extinguished because the Dresslerville pump was not working. Whether the dream was really a prophecy after the fact I do not know. It is significant in any case that the prophecy appeared in the form of a dream. My informant's second dream foretold the violent death of a young Indian woman. The prophecy came true two years later.

Her statement that other Washo would be reluctant to discuss their dreams was all too true, confirming the importance that dreams play in their daily lives. A number of tangential remarks suggest that the belief that dreams confer advance knowledge of the future and that

[P.394, B]

DREAMS AND DREAMERS

(2566)

787 they confer power is still common among the Washo. One informant said, in talking about "old-time dreamers": "Today a lot of people will say they had a dream about something, and act real big. I just tell them they are crazy. They aren't real dreamers. They couldn't have a dream about their girl friend."

Until very recent times a dream was justification for almost any group activity. The most common motivation for such events as a pine-nut dance, a war party, or a rabbit or antelope drive was usually that "So-and-So had a dream." An announcement would be made and others would gather for the event.

These dreams are clearly different from the visitations of spirits to prospective shamans, which occurred repeatedly and were kept secret. Dreamers, on the other hand, publicly reported individual dreams. Being a dreamer appears to have been one of the important factors in attaining positions of leadership, informal as such positions were among the Washo. The almost legendary Captain Jim,[6] who was acknowledged as a leader by all the Washo in the late nineteenth century, is considered to have been a dreamer by many of the Washo. Those informants who remember the big times at Double Springs Flat, in which a large number of the Washo of the day participated prior to the pine-nut harvest, usually begin their accounts with the statement that Jim would have a dream and announce the date of the meeting. Various parts of the ceremony were also validated by dreams. It is equally clear that although Jim was an honored leader and had dreaming power he was not considered a doctor.

Negative testimony also indicates the importance of dreaming in Washo life. It is to the advantage of certain individuals to deny the "chieftainship" of Captain Jim; they vehemently deny that he was a dreamer but insist that he was simply a good man who was trusted by the Washo. "That Jim was just a good old guy that everybody obeyed because they liked him and the whole group selected him. He wasn't no more of a dreamer than I am," is the way one claimant for the Washo chieftainship put it. However, his own claim was based on his relationship to a man who was a rabbit boss and who dreamed when it was time to hunt rabbits.

Clearly the Washo believed and still believe that dreams make one privy to the future and provide important insights on which one can base decisions. The specific uses to which dreams can be put change with the situation. Antelope dreaming is no longer important because there are no antelope. Rabbit dreamers no longer exist because the rabbit drive has lost much of its importance in Washo life. Conversely, dreams dealing with modern problems appear to be taken seriously.

One informant often dreams of snakes and evidences a great fear of them. The Washo view this behavior as a rational response to a real warning and consider the man's caution as good judgment in the face of repeated warnings.

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[6]Captain Jim is the only Washo whom the Washo generally accept as having been a leader of the entire tribe. Other claimants to the title of chief of the Washo are contemptuously discounted. There were in the past a number of men, usually considered leaders of a "bunch" who were called "captains" or, less often, "chiefs" because they dealt with the white population. The entire institution of captain may well be a post-white development.

881 The ritual for boys is less important than that for girls.

881 The emphasis for a boy is on his developing ability as a hunter. Although hunting is far less important
868 today than it was even in the recent past, few Washo
224 go through the winter without depending on rabbit or
[178] deer for meat. The pursuit of the squirrel, ground squirrel, gopher, and other small game appears to be minimal, but certainly this food is not spurned, if available. One of the common legal conflicts with the
[648] white man stems from out-of-season hunting during the winter by Washo men filling out the family larder.

Young boys were encouraged to hunt with bow and arrow as soon as they could. Quite often such training was carried out by an older male relative--a grandfather or an old uncle. Expeditions of old men and young boys after chipmunk and squirrel appear to have been common, freeing able-bodied men for major hunting while the experienced, but less able, older men instructed the boys.

881 However, all the game taken by a boy was taboo to
224 his immediate family. This included young deer and
262 does which he might kill. Such game was given to another family, usually related. The boy was also forbidden to eat his own take. The taboo included any
[226] fish the boy caught.

When a boy killed a buck deer considered by his father or other male relative to be big enough, he went through a simple ceremony. One informant said that in the old days a boy was required to crawl under the antlers of his kill. His father or older male relative then gave him a bath, and from that time he was considered a man and the taboo on his kill was lifted from himself and his family.

[115] My informant, a mother of four sons now over forty, stated that all her sons had gone through the taboo period and were bathed by their father when they killed their first big buck. Until very recently she received meat from some relatives with a young son who hunted frequently.

[178] Whether or not the young Washo are still observing this taboo and ritual I was unable to determine. However, in certain conservative families it seems probable that at least minimal ritual is observed.

MARRIAGE
(2018-2051)

585 Marriage is entirely a social institution, and no
[771] religious elements appear to have entered into it. Traditionally the ceremony, if there was any at all, consisted of a "chief" (respected man) throwing a blanket over the shoulders of a couple at a dance.
584 Ceremonial gatherings, such as the pine-nut dances
796 and the girls' dances were important in the selection of marriage partners, inasmuch as boys and girls came together at these gatherings to engage in flirtation, affairs, and courtship. Dreamers at the "big
[791] times" are reported by informants to have exhorted
[581] married couples to be good to each other and not fight (see also Lowie 1939, p. 303).

DEATH
(2389-2453)

764 No amount of social dislocation or cultural impact alters the constant fact of death. Each generation faces

224 [136] southern ranges of the Nevada herds. However, small herds did range in the eastern portion of Washo country, but the appearance of firearms and livestock eliminated the antelope completely in this area. One [177] informant, himself seventy-five, remembers stories [538] about the hunts, told to him by a very old brother-in-law who remembered the antelope songs.

[533] Another informant, generally a good source of hunting information, admitted that he did not know anything about the subject. He had never hunted antelope, nor had his father or uncles.

[787] The signal to hunt was a dream announcing the [624] presence of antelope to a dreamer, who acted as leader of the hunt. The entire process was considered [791] to be magical by this informant who said:

> 224 789 "There was really no corral. Mebbe just a few piles of brush. The people just danced around and sang, and that kept them antelope there like they was hypnotized. They could keep them right there all night that way. After they held them all night they'd start to slaughter at sunrise. They'd sing: 'We aren't doing this for meanness or for fun but [533] we want you for fine food,' or something like that. I heard the song once but I never learned it all. I wish I had, now."

[763] This informant was certain that the Washo did not expect a person to die as a result of the exercise of [186] antelope charming. He had heard of other tribes which believed this, and he thought it peculiar (Steward 1941: 218-220). This explanation compares favorably with the culture element distribution lists presented by [114] Stewart, which reported none of the traits usually considered as part of the shaman complex in antelope hunting common among Basin Shoshone and Paiute. (Stewart 1941; Steward 1941.)

224 185 178 [237] Rabbits (92-96).—The pursuit of the jack rabbit appears to have been changing in its importance during the past century. Several informants recall being told in their youth by old men that often only the hides were stripped from rabbits to make blankets, but that most of the meat was discarded because other game was plentiful. However, firearms and agriculture soon put an end to antelope hunting, and the trans-Sierran region, like most of the nation, suffered a steady de- [484] cline in the number of deer. All informants agree that in their own youth trips to California after deer were [136] necessary because there were almost no deer east of the Sierra. All Indians agree that the deer population in Nevada today is far greater than it was in the early years of this century. The decrease in antelope and deer forced a greater dependence on the jack rabbit as a source of food as well as fur. The communal nature of the rabbit hunt may have made possible a gradual transference of ritual traits from the antelope complex to the rabbit hunt.

224 [171] Traditionally the Washo drove rabbits into nets, a method common in the Basin. Stewart's notes, taken [535] from informants in their seventies in 1936, make no mention of any supernatural aspect of the rabbit drive. 224 624 787 791 Evening dancing during the rabbit drive was denied. There was, however, a special leader who directed the hunt. In later times these men were credited with dreaming power, as this quotation illustrates: "Jack Wallace would dream where the rabbits were and when it was time for hunting he would send out a call." The man mentioned was described as the last of the real

[P. 380, B]

791 224 624 787 [782] 224 178 [464] 624 224 178 [182] [177] 224 535

dreamers. This power made him extremely influential among the Washo, and his descendants are considered among the claimants for the "chieftainship." There appear to have been formalized prayers which were said before the hunt by a man with power over rabbits.

Today, rabbit hunts are invariably held on Sunday. In the words of one informant: "Nowadays anybody can just say 'Let's have a hunt this Sunday.'[9] They have to hunt on Sunday because most of the men have jobs during the week."

The disintegration of the ritualized aspects of rabbit driving is not complete, however, and many Washo prefer to hunt with a certain man who lives in the Indian colony at Carson City. While no one will openly claim that he has supernatural power, it seems clear that his presence is important to other Indians. His role is that of leader or captain who superintends the order and discipline of the line of hunters who today sweep a wide area, armed with shotguns. D'Azevedo, who was fortunate enough to take part in a hunt in 1955, states that prior to the hunt this man withdrew from the group. When he asked what the leader was doing he met evasion, and he concluded that perhaps the man was praying. In the period covered by the memory of my oldest informants, dances were often staged nightly during the rabbit drives. The dancing is invariably described as "just for fun" and probably was more social than religious, but such dancing appears to have been part of other ceremonial or semiceremonial occasions such as the girls' dances, first-fish ceremonies and the pine-nut dances. It seems clear that whatever tendency there was to shift the ritualized aspects of antelope hunting to rabbit drives has been stemmed by a growing dependence of the Washo on wage labor which precludes their response to dream-inspired hunts.

224 [262]

Bear (298, 2558-2561).—Bear hunting appears never to have been a subsistence activity among the Washo. Many informants stoutly deny that bear meat was ever eaten, although bear were hunted. No Washo ever gave a direct answer to the question of why they hunted bear if they didn't eat the meat. Others stated that the bear might be eaten in extreme starvation conditions but was never eaten regularly.

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On the other hand, almost all Washo men were able to describe in detail the method of hunting and they obviously enjoyed telling bear-hunting stories. The following story told to me by one of the eldest men in Dresslerville, who claims it was told to him by a very old man, is consistent with the stories told by other informants.

> "There was hardly any Washo who kill bear. But I know this much . . . the man who went in there and did it tells me . . . bears have their own home in the rocks . . . a hole going in the rocks. Go in there naked with a knife or arrow in one hand and burning pitch in other . . . light scares him out [the bear],' then other men shoot the bear in the mouth with poison arrow [see deer hunting for reference to poison] . . . get sick for four or five days, maybe a week. Then the man goes back in. Hardly any Indians could do this.[10]

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[787] [791]

[9] This statement was made to point out to me that in other times only special people, inspired by dreams, would have suggested a rabbit hunt.

[10] This kind of a statement was common and whenever it was made suggestions of special power were made explicit later in the conversation, or were implied by the attitude of the informant.

[P.382, B]

222 527 787 791 [211]

"This prayer[11] fella [Captain Jim] lived at Double Springs all year round. He would have a dream telling him when to have a meeting. He was what you would call a religious man. He would get someone he could trust and send out a long, tanned string of hide with knots in it. For every day until the meeting there was a knot and every day the messenger untied a knot so the people would know how many days they had until the meeting.

"All the men came and hunted for four days, and the women would start gathering pine nut. They would hang up the game to let it dry.

"The prayer wouldn't eat meat during those four days but he could drink cold water, and some lady would cook him pine nut.

"Every night they would have a dance. On the fourth day everybody would bring the food they had and put it in front of the prayer, and then he would pick some man who was fair [just] and the food was divided a little before sunrise. If you have a small family you get less, if you have a big family you get more.[12]

[782] "Then the prayer makes a prayer something like this: 'Our father I dream that we must take a bath and then paint. Even the childrens . . . [we must] wash away the bad habits so we won't get sick from the food we have in front of us!'

"Then everybody go to the river . . . no matter if there was a little ice on the water, and take a bath. If they was not near the river they bathed the kids from baskets at Double Springs. The prayer he prayed for pine nut, rabbit, and deer."

222 527 791

Suzie Dick, an ancient Washo woman who claims to have reached the century mark in 1959, recalls that Captain Jim was her mother's sister's son and that she called him brother. He was a big man in a figurative if not a literal sense. He wore eagle feathers on his head and arms. He had red trousers made out of a blanket with feathers on the sides of the legs. As she remembers him at these ceremonies: "He would scare you to death." The assembled Washo brought pine nuts, deer meat, megal [Indian tea], and much other food. Captain Jim prayed and gave a sermon, urging everyone to drink water and avoid liquor, and supervised four nights of dancing.

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Judging from the age of these two informants, these meetings, which they claim were attended by all the Washo, were held between 1880 and 1900. Most Washo agree that these large meetings were the way "they did it in the old days." However, "the old days" appear not to be aboriginal but the late nineteenth century, when the Washo experienced a brief period of semiunity and prosperity.

[756] Rupert, the psychologically oriented shaman comments, "Hell, them northern Washo didn't come down to Double Springs very much. They got their pine nuts southeast of Reno. Captain Jim he was only a big man to them Carson Valley Washo. He didn't have nothing to say to the northern bunch."

222 527 Despite this, it seems clear that during the last part of the nineteenth century large numbers of Washo from the various areas did, in fact, gather at Double

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[11]Used in an adjectival sense. In the reference below prayer is used nominally.

[124] [12]No matter how reluctant aged Washo may have been to discuss other aspects of the past, they became eloquent about any occasion on which food was plentiful. They describe in minute detail the kinds and amount of food at a feast although they cannot remember the time, place, or fiesta present.

222 527 [178] Springs prior to the pine nutting. It seems equally clear that this was distinctly a postwhite phenomenon and that in aboriginal times such gatherings were much smaller.

[791] The essential elements of these pine-nut ceremonies are clear. There was a gathering of a number of bands, usually at the prompting of a dreamer who knew certain prayers and songs which would insure a successful harvest. There was a sharing of food among the celebrants, as well as dancing and ceremonial bathing. Such affairs were held in Sierra Valley and at Double Springs and probably at a number of other places in the pine-nut hills.

668 222 527 791 622 The large celebrations at Double Springs appear to have taken on a distinctly nativistic or revitalistic cast. Informants remember Captain Jim's exhortations to abstain from white man's whiskey, to treat each other as brothers and sisters, to eat Indian food, and to apply themselves to the business of hunting and gathering. He himself refused to wear new white clothing but accepted only used garments. It was during this period that Washo received individual pine-nut allotments based on their traditional picking grounds.

668 222 527 114 178 Mooney (1896), whose information on the Washo was filtered through the Paiute, reports the Washo during this period as a shattered remnant of a former society eking out an existence in the dump heaps of white settlements in Nevada. The fact that the Washo did not respond to the Ghost Dance seems in his mind to support his notions about the condition of the tribe. However, among older informants this period is invariably recalled as an almost golden age. Although the implications of movements such as the Ghost Dance were not clear in Mooney's time, it seems more than likely that the Washo failed to join the movement because they were not suffering the social and cultural dislocation of the Paiute, Plains tribes, or California Indians and, in fact, may have been undergoing a process of social unification under Captain Jim. This unification appears to have had its primary symbolization in the ritual activity which surrounded earlier ceremonies

[211] concerned with pine-nut harvesting. The use of a hide

[721] string to summon people to the meeting appears earlier as a war signal used by a threatened band to entreat other Washo (often not too successfully) to come

622 222 527 791 to their aid.

With the death of Captain Jim, the large gatherings at Double Springs appear to have ceased. In the words of one informant, "When he died all them things like the knotted string and that stuff died with him."

527 222 754 After his death the pine-nut dances continued to be held in various places in Washo country—Sugar Loaf Mountain, Genoa, and Sierra Valley being the most frequently mentioned. Jim's daughter (or sister's daughter) who was married to the claimant Captain Pete and was the mother of the present claimant, Hank Pete, staged a number of dances around Genoa until her death. This action is of interest in view of the fact that she was considered a dangerous woman and a poisoner. It

[756] suggests that there was in fact no clear distinction between doctors and witches or sorcerers. Her knowledge of pine-nut prayers and songs made here essential in the

755
178 (1941, 413-14). Although the rite itself has changed but slightly since white
756 contact and the shaman is a respected figure and widely patronized, the shaman's curing rite is on the point of disappearance because the shamans themselves are dying out. Only one remains and he was born in 1885.[3]

The Pinenut Dance

527
791 One special man, says Hank Pete, dreamed about pinenuts and prayed
824 for them. He was not a shaman but he had power (see Freed and Freed, 1963).
222 He prayed that the pinenuts increase in number and not be full of worms. This
[787] man was the leader of the pinenut dance and was the person who decided whether the pinenuts were ready for picking. If people were to pick the pinenuts
[782] without the leader's consent, says Pete, the nuts would be wormy and rotten.
[535]

222 Pinenuts were probably the most important single food of the Washo.
824 The pinenut dance (gumsabaʔai) was held in the fall of the year before the pinenut harvest. The leader called the people together in Double Springs Flat
527 by sending around a knotted cord. The knots represented the number of days
[791] remaining before the ceremony was to begin. The messenger untied a knot every day as he traveled about calling people. As the people assembled, the
[262] leader of the communal rabbit hunt gathered as many people as possible for a
[211] large rabbit drive, and outstanding hunters would organize communal deer
[624] hunts. The hunting drives lasted four days after which the Washo began the pinenut dance.

526 The pinenut dance lasted four nights. Each morning everyone had to
527 take a oath. During the day the Washo engaged in a variety of games and
[515] races, all accompanied by heavy gambling. People of different moieties op-
[525] posed each other in the games. The most popular games were men's football, a ball race, foot races, archery contests, the hand game and women's shinny.
[616] Usually teams from the different moieties played each other in all the games.

Men's football was played on a field with goals at either end. The object was to kick a small buckskin ball between the two sticks forming the goal. Five or six men played on a side. The game began with the throwing of the ball between the two teams in the middle of the field. Wrestling was allowed in the football game. One goal won the game.

The ball race was also played by men. Two teams arranged themselves in straight lines at right angles to a line between the paired sticks forming the goal. Each team had a ball which at the start of the game was in the possession of the team member at the end of the line farthest from the goal. The

Analysis

178 One factor common to those ceremonies on the verge of disappearance
755 and lacking in the ones likely to survive is the need of a specialist. A shaman
756 is necessary for the curing ceremony. A shaman achieves his position through a supernatural experience and a period of training under an established shaman (Freed and Freed, 1963). His role is probably the most specialized among the
[177] Washo. The shaman's curing rite has survived into the 1950's in relatively unchanged form despite the presence of two competing methods of curing illness: modern western medicine and the Peyote Cult. Yet the rite appears headed for sudden disappearance because the shaman himself is disappearing.

178 The leader of the pinenut dance was a specialist who achieved his posi-
527 tion through personality traits and force of character which commanded re-
791 spect. The last leader of the pinenut dance died years ago and the recent revival of the dance was a very attenuated version of the aboriginal ceremony.
[262] Pinenuts are no longer a staple food for the Washo. Many people earn their livings entirely by wage work and buy all their food. Yet some people still go to the hills for the pinenut season, and the attempted revival of the dance indicates an interest in it. But the dance is gone, and a prominent factor in its disappearance seems to be that no leader of the aboriginal type is alive to organize the ceremony.

178 The surviving ceremonies, on the other hand, require no specialists.
881 The girl's puberty dance has not changed greatly from aboriginal times, and the changes are generally modifications of traditional practices. Any woman can sponsor a dance. Thus the ceremony is not threatened with sudden dis-
[177] appearance as is the shaman's curing rite. A factor that may have an effect upon the persistence of the girl's puberty dance is that no ceremonies of
177 American culture are in competition with it. However, the effects of compet-
178 ing cultural patterns are not clear. No competition exists for the pinenut dance, yet it has effectively disappeared. Competing ceremonies are present for birth and death ceremonies, yet these are still practiced. The shaman's curing rite has two competing ceremonies, but it remains relatively unaffected pending the death of the remaining shaman.[3]

178 The ceremonies at birth and death require no specialists. The ceremonies at birth have perhaps changed more than either the girl's puberty dance or death ceremonies, but they are still observed. The greatest changes have been the complete abandonment of the traditional male observances. The old person who makes a speech at the funeral can be anyone, male or female. He does not organize the funeral; his role is ended in a few minutes and requires no special personality characteristics.

[3] [Footnote appears on p. 39 -- Analyst]

14:Stewart E-5 (1936-1938)1944 NR13 Northern Paiute NR13
Washo NT20

PEYOTE PARAPHERNALIA; MOONS; DANCE AROUND ALTAR